

Spring 1-15-2000

ENG 1002C-049-059: Composition and Literature

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English 1002 C: A course description and syllabus.

Instructor: Spear
Office: Coleman Hall 332
Phone: 581-7011 or 345-6819
Office Hours: ~~1:00-2:00 M and W~~
and by appointment.

Required purchases:

a spiral notebook to be used as a journal for this class only
four exam booklets (available at the Union Bookstore)

Textbooks:

Charters, Ann. The Story and Its Writer.
Griffith, Kelly. Writing Essays About Literature.
Klaus, Gilbert, and Field, Jr. Stages of Drama.
Meyer, Michael. Poetry: An Introduction.

Writing as a Process

Writing is a teachable skill, like carpentry or painting or playing the guitar. The big difference is that you can have a wonderful life without ever becoming a carpenter or painter or musician, but effective writing is an indispensable skill that will help you along in whatever role you create for yourself. Rumor has it that good writing is the product of inspiration, but this is for the most part a fallacy. Good writing is not really even a product at all; it is a process. And, as Linda Flower says in Problem Solving Strategies for Writing, "if a writer's method relies on waiting for inspiration, she may have a long and uninterrupted wait" (17).

The process theory of writing also does away with the old notion of "first you think it up, then you write it down." What happens more often than not is that you write your way toward what you believe: you discover new ideas as you write. Writing becomes a thinking process that improves with practice. That is why we will be keeping journals. The journal writing technique is a way of practicing the necessary skills in way that adds up to many many pages, without demanding eight or ten papers from you. It also gives you a no-pressure environment in which to warm up your skills.

English 1002

The prerequisite for this course is the successful completion of English 1001 C or its equivalent. No student may take 1002 C without having satisfied this prerequisite. This is because in our work here we will be applying the skills studied in 1001 C to the specific purpose of writing about three major genres of literature: short

fiction, drama, and poetry.

Real life writing situations, situations in which you may be applying for a job, a promotion, a grant, etc., always have a specific purpose and audience. General writing skills and talents remain as pure potential unless they can be harnessed for a purpose and fitted to the needs of a specific audience. As we write about literature, we are really practicing the survival skill of adapting to the demands of the environment.

Grades:

Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following tasks:

- 12.5% -- A 3 to 5 page paper on short fiction, due February 16.
- 12.5% -- A Mid-term Examination on March 6.
- 12.5% -- A 3 to 5 page comparison paper, due March 27.
- 12.5% -- Your journal, collected March 29.
- 12.5% -- An oral presentation of Poetry, between April 3 and April 19.
- 25.0% -- A 5 to 7 page research paper, due April 26.
- 12.5% -- A Final Examination, during finals week, date to be announced.

This may be one of the hardest classes you will take at the university, and it certainly will be one of the most important because, in a way, you are simultaneously attending all of your university classes that will follow. I am available by appointment at your convenience if I can help, and I have included my home phone number. Also, there is an excellent -- and free -- service available to you at the Writing Center, Coleman Hall 301. You will walk out of the door with a better paper every single time.

If an assignment is late, it will be docked one letter grade for each day it is late. Papers that have still not been submitted two weeks after the due date will be regarded as "missing" and will receive a -2. They may not be made up. (See "Grading," below.)

Grading:

I will use the following values in averaging your grades:

A+ = 4.2	B+ = 3.2	C+ = 2.2	D+ = 1.2	F = 0.0
A = 4.0	B = 3.0	C = 2.0	D = 1.0	Missing = -2.0
A - = 3.8	B - = 2.8	C - = 1.8	D - = 0.8	

I will use the following cutoff points in determining final grades:

A = 4.2 to 3.8	B = 3.7 to 2.8	C = 2.7 to 1.8
N/C = 1.7 and below		

This is an A, B, C, or no-credit class, so you can't get a D or an F, but if you get a N/C you will have to take it again. Invest your talents and time in this class and you will never regret it.

Journals:

Requiring you to keep a journal is a blessing in disguise. It is a place for you to help satisfy departmental requirements for the quantity of writing you produce, free from some of the limitations associated with producing a polished rhetorical artifact. Journal entries can record your impressions of the works you read and serve as practice fields for the essays you subsequently generate. Each day's entry should consist of at least one hundred and fifty words. The journals will be collected, and their evaluation will constitute a significant portion of your grade.

Information for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Plagiarism Policy

I am required to say this about the English Department's policy concerning plagiarism:

"Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism -- 'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and / or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) -- has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay, and a grade of N/C for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs office.

This is pretty strong language for a pretty serious offense; it occurs, and has resulted, in some cases, in expulsion from the university. We're learning a survival skill here, and a cheater is only cheating himself.

Syllabus for English 1002C -- Spring semester, 2000.

- Jan. 10 Introduction to the Class: Composition and Literature.
Review of Syllabus.
Review of Strategies of Invention.
Writing about literature:
 MLA Format
 Audience and Purpose
 Concepts versus Description
 Present Tense
- 12 Read Woody Allen's "The Kuglemass Episode," p. 30 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
In-class diagnostic essay.
- 17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day -- no class
- 19 Read Atwood's "Happy Endings," p. 74 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
Writing groups.
In class discussion.
(*) Memo to identify genealogical focus of research paper.
- 24 Read Carver's "Cathedral," p. 237 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 26 Read Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums," p. 1255 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 31 Read Erdrich's, "The Red Convertible," p 460 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
(*) Memo to report purity of genealogical descent for research paper.
- Feb. 2 Read Oates's, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"
p. 1052 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
Writing groups.
In class discussion.

- Feb. 7 (*) View video excerpt from Smooth Talk.
One page pre-research hypothesis: Anticipated Cultural Perspectives.
- 9 Complete video screening of Smooth Talk.
In class discussion.
Turn in draft of 3-5 page paper on short fiction to date.
- 14 Conferences. No Class.
- 16 *** 3 - 5 page paper due concerning short fiction covered to date.
In class reading viewing of Death of a Salesman, with Dustin Hoffman.
- 21 Read Miller's, Death of a Salesman, p. 844 in Klaus *et. al.*.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 23 Continued discussion of Death of a Salesman.
- 28 View video excerpt and discuss.
- Mar. 1 (*) Complete video screening and class discussion of Miller.
Turn in Bibliography of primary sources for research paper.
- 6 *** Mid-term Examination.
- 8 (*) Secure primary sources for research paper in hard copy.

SPRING BREAK

- 20 Read Carver's "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love," p. 256 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 22 Read Chopin's "The Story of an Hour," p 333 in Charters.
Read Woolf's "Say Yes" p. 1384 in Charters.
Journal entry on your readings.
In class discussion.

Mar.	27	***	3 - 5 page comparison paper due. Poetry. Please bring Meyer's <u>Poetry: An Introduction</u> . Poetry and Music.			
	29		Poetry and Music continued. Bring in your requests. Journal entry on a favorite song with poetic lyrics.			
		***	Turn in Journals.			
Apr.	3		Animal Poems:	"Suburban"	Ciardi	148
				"Dog's Death"	Updike	11
				"Hazel Tells Laverne"	Machan	53
				"The Frog"	Anonymous	240
				"Lightning Bugs"	Slyman	118
	5			"The Fish"	Bishop	20
				"Root Cellar"	Roethke	87
				"Woodchucks"	Kumin	55
				"To a Wasp"	Moore	114
				"Crow"	Hughes	H/O
				"Black Rook ..."	Plath	H/O
				"The Rabbit"	St. Germain	H/O
		(*)	Turn in critiques of poetry to be included in research paper.			
	10		Poems in Their Underpants:			
				"Blow"	Humphrey	179
				"you fit into me"	Atwood	109
				"l (a"	cummings	25
				"We Real Cool"	Brooks	70
				"Marks"	Pastan	122
				"Poem"	Williams	83
	12			"The Red Wheelbarrow"	Williams	233
				"she being Brand"	cummings	49
				"This is Just to Say"	Williams	467
				"Going to Extremes"	Armour	162
			Sports Shorts:	"The Pitcher"	Francis	179
				"The Double-Play"	Wallace	461

Apr. 17 Taste of Tradition: Read Emily Dickinson's poems, p. 257 - 278 in Meyer, esp. "I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died, Tell All the Truth, and I Like a Look of Agony."

Read Wolff, p. 285, and Bennett, p. 286.

(*) For the research paper in progress, turn in a discussion of universal elements within the literature you have researched versus elements which are unique to the cultural group which you are investigating.

19 Read Robert Frost: "The Road Not Taken, The Pasture, Mending Wall, Home Burial, Fire and Ice, and Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

Read Coursen, p. 328; Farley, p. 331; and Walcott, p. 332.

24 In class workshop to assemble research paper.

26 *** 5 - 7 page Research paper due.
Review for final examination.

*** Final Exam (Date to be announced)

*** = A graded assignment is due on this date.

(*) = One of the eight stages of the research paper should be done.